



**CATAWBA
RIVERKEEPER®**

VOLUNTEER-LED CLEANUP GUIDE



www.catawbariverkeeper.org | 115 Willow Drive, McAdenville, NC

ABOUT CATAWBA RIVERKEEPER

Mission

The Catawba Riverkeeper preserves, protects, and restores the waters of the Catawba-Wateree River Basin for all through education, advocacy, and engagement.

Vision

That the waters of the entire Catawba-Wateree River basin will always be of high quality to sustain & enhance the lives of all people, wildlife, and ecosystems that depend on it.

Structure

The Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation is a member supported 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded and given license from the Waterkeeper Alliance, Inc. in 1997. In 1998, the Board of Directors hired its first Riverkeeper. Since its beginning, the focus of this organization has been to directly improve water quality through monitoring and conservation advocacy, increase public awareness through education, and develop strong partnerships. CRF operates in 26 counties of the Catawba-Wateree River watershed in North and South Carolina with administrative headquarters located in McAdenville, NC. The three main pillars of our organization: Educate, Engage, Protect.

River Geography

The Catawba-Wateree River begins in the Blue Ridge Mountains of western North Carolina and flows through the Charlotte metropolitan area into Lake Wateree in South Carolina. The name of the river changes to the Wateree River in Lake Wateree and eventually joins with the Congaree River in Lake Marion. The river passes through or near major cities like Charlotte and Rock Hill, and smaller cities like Hickory, Denver, Gastonia, and Great Falls. Many of these communities get their drinking water from the river, so it is incredibly important to keep it healthy and clean! The River is 225 miles and flows through 26 counties in North and South Carolina.



BEFORE YOUR CLEANUP

Choose a Site

- Locate a site in an area or in your neighborhood by a creek. Parks and public access sites work well for cleanups. You will want to scout the site prior to your cleanup to assess the trash amount and site conditions.
- Note how many people would be needed to cleanup that site based on the trash amount and site conditions including access, parking, etc. Groups of 15 or less work well for most cleanup sites.

Pick Up Supplies

- Contact Volunteer & Community Science Manager, Kaity D'Angelo, at kaity.d@catawbariverkeeper.org with the following information about your group cleanup. To provide time to prepare for your cleanup, please contact us at least 1 month prior to your cleanup date.
 - Proposed date of your cleanup
 - Maximum number of cleanup participants
 - Site location address
 - Will you need waders to access a stream?
- Coordinate a time to pick up supplies from The Catawba Riverkeeper Boathouse the week before your cleanup. See the supply checklist (next page) for supplies that we provide.
 - 115 Willow Drive, McAdenville, NC 28101

Disposal Plan

- You will want to create a plan for litter pickup. If you are at a park, locate the closest dumpster for disposal. You may need to contact your local municipality or waste department to schedule pickup if you are not at a site with a public dumpster. Make sure your disposal plan is in place before the day of your cleanup.

CLEANUP SUPPLY CHECKLIST

Make sure you have all of the following items before beginning the cleanup. Catawba Riverkeeper provides all of the supplies listed except hand sanitizer.

- ☐ Gloves
- ☐ Bags
- ☐ Grabbers
- ☐ Waders (limited amount)*
- ☐ Reflective Vests
- ☐ Riverkeeper Waivers
- ☐ Trash Tracker Data Form
- ☐ Hand Sanitizer**

*Waders only come in whole sizes and fit over socks not shoes.

**We do not provide hand sanitizer but recommend you have it onsite.

DURING YOUR CLEANUP

Instruction

- Before starting the cleanup, make sure all participants have signed the provided volunteer waiver.
- Set clear boundaries for your cleanup. Create cleanup teams to disperse and conquer the litter or stay as a group and work your way to the end of the litter site. If your group splits up, set a time to meet back together. Never work alone, always have a cleanup partner.
- At the end of your cleanup, make sure all bags of trash and any bulky items are placed properly inside the public dumpster. If arranging separate pickup, place all items in one easily accessible location for waste pickup. Follow the instructions provided by your waste department to make sure your items are picked up successfully.

Safety & Risk Management

- Check the weather leading up to your cleanup. Rising water levels in creeks can be extremely dangerous and are not suitable to host a cleanup.
- Wear closed toed shoes, long sleeves, and long pants to prevent injury. Dress and prepare for the weather: wear layers in the winter and hydrate as much as possible in the summer.
- Check the site upon arrival for any hazards (slippery rocks, hazardous trash, poisonous plants and animals, etc.) and inform your group.
- Wear bright safety vests when roadside and use extreme caution.
- Use trash grabbers as much as possible and wear gloves at all times during the cleanup.
- If children under 18 are participating, make sure they stay with their guardian and are monitored when picking up trash. Children must be at least 12 years of age to cleanup in the stream.
- Always keep a first aid kit with the group.
- Know where the closest hospital or emergency care center is located.

AFTER YOUR CLEANUP

Reporting

- Please either return the trash tracker data sheet that is provided or email it to kaity.d@catawbariverkeeper.org. This allows us to know the impact you are making for our basin. We will also add your group cleanup to our Volunteer Cleanup Map on our website to recognize your great stewardship!

Photos!

- Send any photos from your cleanup (unique items found, your group having fun picking up trash, participants in the creek, etc.), so we can feature you on our social media pages to highlight your volunteerism. Send a group photo and provide a before and after photo of the site or your trash pile at the end of the cleanup.



Return Supplies

- Communicate with Kaity once all supplies have been returned to the volunteer bin at The Boathouse - which should happen the week following your cleanup. Please make sure all Catawba Riverkeeper supplies provided (waivers, data sheet, trash grabbers, gloves, vests, extra trash bags, and waders) are placed back in the bin provided. You do not need to wash gloves or vests.

Thank You!

Volunteers like you ensure clean water for all. Thank you for your valuable time and willingness to keep our waterways healthy!